

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-305

JULY 5, 2006

Operations and Services

Marine and Coastal Weather Services, NWSPD 10-3

MARINE ZONE CHANGE PROCESS

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>.

OPR: OS21 (R. May)

Certified by: OS21 (T. Pierce)

Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSI 10-305, Marine Zone Change Process, dated July 21, 2004. This directive clarifies the change request pertaining to public notification and changes messages.

signed

June 21, 2006

Dennis H. McCarthy
Director, Office of Climate,
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Date

Marine Zone Change Process

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1. Introduction. This procedural instruction describes the process for requesting, coordinating and implementing changes to marine zone maps and marine zone listings filed in the National Weather Service (NWS) Directives System (NDS).
2. Types of Marine Zone Map and Marine Zone Listing Changes. Three different types of marine zone map and marine zone listing changes are described below.
 - 2.1 Corrections for Errors on Marine Zone Maps and in Marine Zone Listings. These changes are necessary to correct errors, or any errors of omission, found on marine zone maps and in marine zone listings in *NWSI 10-302, Marine and Coastal Services Areas of Responsibility*.
 - 2.2 Changes to Marine Zone Boundaries. Changes to marine zone boundaries involve the movement of current marine zone boundaries, the creation of new marine zones, or the deletion of existing marine zones.
 - 2.3 Changes to Marine Zone Names and Codes. Changes to marine zone names and codes result from the correction of errors or other justifiable needs to modify a marine zone name or code.
3. Change Request Procedures and Levels of Approval.
 - 3.1 Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Responsibility. Each WFO is responsible to initiate the change request for all coastal or Great Lakes marine zones in its area of responsibility. In addition, a WFO also issuing offshore and/or high seas forecasts is responsible to initiate the change request for all offshore and/or high seas marine zones in its area of responsibility. Submit the change request (via e-mail, facsimile, or hard copy) to the respective Regional Meteorological Services Division (MSD) Chief after coordinating with users.

The change request will contain:

- a. Any errors found on marine zone maps and in marine zone listings, and proposed corrections.
- b. A written justification for any change to marine zone boundaries. If necessary for clarification, include a clearly labeled map depicting the changes to marine zone boundaries.
- c. A written justification for any change to marine zone names and code. If necessary for clarification, include a clearly labeled map depicting the names and codes. Assign a unique zone number to all newly created zones.
- d. If the zone change requires external notification, then include a draft service or technical change message conforming to format and instructions in NWSI 10-1805. A National Weather Service Change Notice, approved and issued by the Chief, Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch, is required for changes to marine zone boundaries or marine zone names and codes. These changes require at least 120 days of public notification prior to the effective date. Changes to marine zones will be considered for approval two times per year with effective

dates of April 1 or October 1. Therefore all coordinating and processing must be done many months prior to April 1 or October 1, to allow the 120 days notice.

To encourage early collaboration, WFOs should also send an early notification of changes by email to their regional marine program managers as early as possible before submitting the formal change request.

3.2 NWS Regional Headquarters Responsibility. NWS regional headquarters are the points of contact for all change requests received from their respective coastal and Great Lakes WFOs, and WFOs with offshore and high seas responsibilities. The MSD Chief is responsible for reviewing requests (e.g., ensuring sound reasoning and adequate justification) and verifying any errors. The MSD Chief forwards the requests (via email, facsimile, or hard copy) to the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief in Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS) at NWS Headquarters.

To bring OCWWS into early collaboration, the MSD Chief or regional program manager should also send an early notification of changes to the OCWWS Branch Chief as early as possible before forwarding the formal change request.

3.3 NWS National Center for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) Center Responsibility. Each NCEP (national) center issuing offshore and high seas forecasts (Ocean Prediction Center or Tropical Prediction Center) is responsible to initiate the change request for all offshore and high seas marine zones in its area of responsibility. The National Center Branch Chief submits the change request (via e-mail, facsimile, or hard copy) to the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief in OCWWS at NWS Headquarters. See the content in section 3.1 for what the change request will contain.

To encourage early collaboration, the National Center Branch Chief should also send an early notification of changes by email to the OCWWS Branch Chief as early as possible before submitting the formal change request.

4. NWS Headquarters Roles and Responsibilities. The NWS Headquarters offices that are involved with the marine zone change process include: the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (OCWWS), the Office of Science and Technology (OST), the Office of Operational Systems (OOS), and the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer (CFO).

4.1 Office of Climate, Water and Weather Services (OCWWS). OCWWS has the responsibility to ensure maps and zone listings are updated as necessary, and is the final approving authority for all marine zone related changes and effective dates and subsequent updates to ***NWSI 10-302, Marine and Coastal Services Area of Responsibility***. Approval is granted in coordination with the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief. OCWWS should acknowledge marine zone change requests from regional headquarters and national centers within 15 business days of receipt.

The Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief, or designate, is the NWS Headquarters focal point for the overall marine zone change process. The Marine and Coastal Weather

Services Branch Chief, or designate, coordinates with several offices within NWS Headquarters, regional headquarters, National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) centers (includes OPC and TPC) and depending upon the required changes, may correspond with involved WFOs. Specifically, the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief, or designate, is responsible for the following:

- a. Coordinating the details of all marine zone related changes with other NWS Headquarters elements;
 - b. Ensuring that any changes made by other NWS Headquarters elements are timely, accurately, and correctly formatted;
 - c. Maintaining accurate records for all marine zone map and listing changes;
 - d. Approving and processing the PNS Service Change Notice submitted by the appropriate regional headquarters or national centers and making sure these issuances are distributed to NWS users within the specified time frame;
 - e. Ensuring that all updates to *NWSI 10-302, Marine and Coastal Services Areas of Responsibility* are posted, and as up-to-date as feasible; and
 - f. Coordinating with other entities such the U.S. Coast Guard.
- 4.2 Office of Science and Technology (OST). OST has the responsibility to modify the Geographic Information System (GIS) map shapefile. The revised shapefile is posted to the AWIPS Map Database Catalog for public access, placed on the NOAA1 secure server, and converted to a border point file. OST transmits a notice via AWIPSINFO indicating that the revised marine zone map has been posted to the AWIPS Map Database Catalog, and transmits a “notification of change” e-mail to OOS and the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief in OCWWS.
- 4.3 Office of Operational Systems (OOS). OOS is responsible for tasking individuals with specific assignments to make the required marine zone map and/or zone listing changes.
- 4.3.1 OOS Zone Listing Change Procedure. OOS modifies the zone listing files using standard NWS word processing software. The revised files are attached to an e-mail and sent to the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief, or designate, in OCWWS for review. Once approved, OOS posts the modified marine zone listing files to the appointed server in (.PDF) format.
- 4.3.2 OOS Zone Map Change Procedure. OOS uses GIS compatible software to make the marine zone map revisions. Once approved, OOS posts the updated maps to the appointed server in (.JPG) and (.PDF) formats for viewing and printing. All zone maps must be clearly labeled with the date of the most recent revision. A “notification of map posting” e-mail is then sent to the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief, or designate, in OCWWS, and the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer (CFO) focal point.

- 4.4 Management and Organization Division of the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer (CFO3). The CFO focal point is responsible for updating ***NWSI 10-302, Marine and Coastal Services Areas of Responsibility*** on the NDS website. The CFO focal point should contact the Marine and Coastal Weather Services Branch Chief, or designate, in OCWWS when the website update is complete.